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A Student's Journey to Career Readiness: Maximizing On-Campus Employment

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A Student's Journey to Career Readiness:

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

Daniela Saldana Gurgol

University of San Diego

Dedicated to my mom and dad. Gracias por darme las alas para volar!

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	6
Introduction.....	7
Research Questions.....	9
Background.....	10
Student Employment.....	10
On-campus vs. Off-Campus Employment Literature.....	11
Supervisors and Their Role in On-Campus Student Employment.....	11
Context.....	12
Methodology.....	15
Cycle Descriptions.....	17
Cycle One: The student experience.....	17
Cycle Two: The supervisor experience.....	18
Cycle Three: The institutional experience.....	18
Needs Assessment.....	19
Cycle One: The Student Experience.....	21
Overview.....	21
Cycle One Findings.....	22
Supervisory characteristics.....	22
Student Work Experience.....	24
Institutional Culture.....	26
Lessons Learned from Cycle One.....	27
Cycle Two: The Supervisor Experience.....	29

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

Overview.....	29
Cycle Two Findings.....	30
Individual Approach.....	30
Institutional Processes.....	34
Lessons Learned from Cycle Two.....	35
Cycle Three: The Institutional Experience.....	36
Overview.....	36
Cycle Three Findings.....	37
Lack of universality.....	37
Good intentions.....	40
Lessons Learned from Cycle Three.....	41
Limitations.....	42
Recommendations.....	43
Conclusion.....	45
References.....	47
Exhibits.....	49

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to improve my capacity as a supervisor in building career readiness. I used a total of three action research cycles utilizing qualitative methods only. The research participants included professional staff, graduate assistants and part-time student employees within the University of San Diego. The findings of this research provide insights into the lived experiences of student employees, the tactics used by supervisors to develop career readiness and the institutional initiatives to maximize student employment. The primary research question guiding this report is: How can I as a supervisor develop career readiness for undergraduate student employees who work on campus? The secondary question addressed in this report is: How can on-campus employment become a more meaningful out-of-classroom experience at the University of San Diego?

Keywords: student employment, career readiness, managerial practices, outside-of-classroom learning

Introduction

The following action research project is guided by my values of growth and community. My personal journey has developed a deep passion for self-growth. As an immigrant and first-generation student, I can say with confidence that introspection has allowed me to learn from mistakes and build resilience. Ultimately, I often compare my current self with my past self to make sure I am striving to become the best version of myself. For this reason, I enjoy helping others to reflect on their experiences because I have seen the impact this has had on me. The growth mindset I have developed over the year helps me in all facets of my life; from advising students to managing my time. I am constantly learning from my experiences to become a better student affairs professional and human being.

Another value that often appears in my practice is community building. Whenever I get to be part of a new team or community, I strive to create authentic relationships so people can be their true selves. I genuinely care to get to know people and enrich my life with their personal stories. I also make it a priority to give back to the community whether this means feeding people who are experiencing homelessness on Thanksgiving or mentoring a first-generation Latinx college students. At the end of the day, I am very cognizant that I have been granted several privileges throughout my life, such as receiving a K-12 private, Catholic education or being able to cross the Mexican-U.S. border without issues. These privileges motivate me to help others to succeed and feel part of the community, especially those members who are marginalized in our society.

Throughout this study, I looked back at my journey for inspiration. Prior to working in higher education, I spent seven years working in the educational technology industry. During these years, I had several different responsibilities, but my favorite one, by far, was focusing on

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

the professional development of the team members I supervised. I truly enjoyed working with them to identify their strengths and passions, and seeing them get promotions and/or raises based on their performance. Now that I have transitioned to higher education, I am incredibly thankful to continue to have the ability to supervise people, more specifically, to supervise college students.

Though not new to supervising, I have noticed that the managerial skills I developed in the for-profit world needed some fine-tuning. On one end, I have noticed that my managerial style, developed while working with full-time adult employees, is unsuited when working with part-time student employees because emerging adults are at a different developmental stage than adults. From my observations, unlike adult employees, college students are still developing a voice which makes it difficult for them to verbalize their strengths or areas of interest. On the other end, the organizational culture of higher education is significantly different than that of corporate America. From my higher education experience, it seems like student employees are treated as students first and then as employees which changes the dynamics of the supervisor/employee relationship.

As I continue to improve as a supervisor of student employees, this study allowed me to identify the managerial traits and strategies for me to intentionally make on-campus employment valuable to students. My supervisory purpose is that the students that I supervise can articulate the skills they developed while working on-campus and be able to connect these skills with their intended career goals. Moreover, I wanted to understand the perception of student employees and supervisors, and the institutional initiatives regarding student employment at the University of San Diego. Thus, this action research was guided by the following questions:

Primary: How can I as a supervisor develop career readiness for undergraduate student employees who work on campus?

Secondary: How can on-campus employment become a more meaningful out-of-classroom experience at the University of San Diego?

Before I review some pertinent literature, I would first like to define several terms for the purpose of this study. The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), a professional association that connects higher education professionals and employers, defines career readiness as “the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace.” Additionally, in 2017, NACE identified seven competencies related to career readiness: critical thinking/problem solving, oral/written communications, teamwork/collaboration, digital technology, leadership, professionalism/work ethic, career management and global/intercultural competency (“Career Readiness Defined,” n.d). As someone who has been in charge of hiring and supervising employees in the for-profit world, I found this definition and the competencies to be congruent with the skillset observable in top employees. Thus, as a supervisor of student staff, I want to see students develop and articulate the experiences that have polished one -if not all- of these competencies.

In the simplest forms, out-of-classroom experience is any learning experience outside of academics within higher education. Academically, students have the opportunity to reflect on a course’s content by writing essays or completing group presentations. From my observations of on-campus jobs, I am afraid that unless a student has a supervisor committed to student learning and/or development, there could be a missed opportunity to help students make-meaning of their

employment experience. With my study, I sought to understand the perceptions amongst supervisors as it pertains to learning in the workplace.

Background

Over time, researchers have studied student employment and its relationship with academic performance, college persistence, cognitive development, leadership development, career readiness, out-of-classroom learning, and student employment location. To this day, student employment literature does not completely assent with one another. For this reason, my hope is that my study adds to an ongoing discussion that has not reached a conclusion. In this next section, I will summarize the current literature on student employment.

Student Employment

Most research related to college student employment focuses on academic performance or college persistence (Cheng & Alcantara, 2007). Dundes and Marx (2006) identified that students who work between 10-15 hours per week have a better academic performance and graduate on-time because they can better manage their time and learn to appreciate their college education (c, 2006). Other studies have focused on the relationship between leadership development and student employment. A research conducted by Salisbury, Pascarella, Padgett and Blaich (2012), claimed and confirmed that work has a positive impact on first-year students.

Moreover, a few studies have approached student employment as an out-of-classroom experience in college. George Kuh's study (1995) found that seniors perceived work as one of the out-of-classroom experiences that helped them the most with their learning and personal development. Using grounded theory and utilizing Kuh's framework, Cheng and Alcantara (2007) identified that on-campus employment provides several benefits to students such as a

sense of financial independence, an opportunity to explore academic and career interests, a need for managing time, among others (Cheng & Alcantara, 2007).

On-campus vs. Off-Campus Employment Literature

Student employment research has also compared off-campus with on-campus jobs. A study by Salisbury et al. (2012), concluded that, unlike on-campus work, students that work more than ten hours per week off-campus have positive leadership development (Salisbury et al., 2012). On a paper published by Perna, Asha Cooper and Li (2007), they propose that universities expand on-campus employment since research related to off-campus employment has shown that there is a negative relationship between off-campus work and persistence and completion time when students work more than 15 hours. For this reason, their report encourages institutions to analyze the employment perspectives of their student population, reduce educational costs for students, increase federal funding, and improve resources and educational structures for student workers. Another study by Fede, Gorman and Cimini (2018), explored the potential relationship between university employment and academic performance, transferable skills, civic engagement, and societal values and attitudes. The results were all around positive, reasons why the researchers propose that universities provide on-campus employment that expose students to real-world interactions with frequent spaces for reflection in order to create an environment conducive for growth.

Supervisors and Their Role in On-Campus Student Employment

Though limited, student employment literature also speaks to the relationship between on-campus supervisors and student employees. An article by Hansen and Hoag (2018) focuses on the transferability of learning and encourages supervisors to create intentional spaces of reflection as seen in the Iowa GROW initiative at the University of Iowa. An article by

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

McFadden and Wallace Carr (2015) proposes drafting job descriptions that are linked to learning outcomes along with a developmental plan that guides the progress of student employees. In a study, David Frock (2015), found that one could identify mentoring traits amongst supervisors by using the 360-degree evaluation; however, supervisors expressed that lack of resources and training impede them from spending more time mentoring.

Student employment seems to have a positive impact on students. As one can see, there seem to be differences amongst scholars as to how much impact it can have based on the work hours, location or spaces of reflection. For example, off-campus employment seems to provide better opportunities for students to develop leadership skills. On the other end, off-campus employment impacts academic completion. My conclusion after reviewing the current literature is that on-campus employment has ample room for improvement. As someone who has the opportunity to supervise undergraduate students, I want to make sure their on-campus work is as beneficial as possible for them to be successful in their life post-college as well as while they're pursuing their Bachelor's.

Context

I currently work at the University of San Diego (USD), a private, Catholic university. At the university, there are two categories of on-campus employment: Federal Work-Study (FWS) positions and Casual Worker (CW) positions. Federal Work-Study positions are dependent on the student's financial aid package, meaning not all students can access these positions. Casual Worker positions are funded by the university and can be accessed by every student. Most FWS positions are for undergraduate students and on-campus positions though there are a handful of graduate students and off-campus FWS positions available through the university. Based on the insights by the former Director of Financial Aid, Judith Lewis Logue, the university employs

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

about 1,000 students between Federal Work-Study and Casual Worker positions (“Student Guide 101,” 2011). These positions are across all divisions of the university such as student affairs, academic affairs, university ministry, etc. The Student Employment Office (SEO), which is part of the Office of Financial Aid, is in charge of publicizing student employment positions, coordinating with supervisors and processing hiring paperwork for the FWS positions.

At USD, I have been able to interact with student employees as supervisor and advisor in two different offices within student affairs. Last academic year, I worked in the University Centers (UC), the university’s student union building, as the Graduate Assistant. The UC Office’s management team consists of four full-time professional staff plus me. At the time of my employment, the UC employed around 40 undergraduate students, most of them using Federal Work-Study awards, who were assigned to one of the three teams within this office: Operations, Scheduling and Ticket Office. Student employees would work between 7-12 hours per week to help with room set ups, scheduling of events, selling of tickets, amongst other responsibilities.

As the Graduate Assistant for the University Centers, I spent half of my time overseeing the Ticket Office, meaning that I directly supervised three student staff members and managed the operational logistics of the Ticket Office, such as inventory, revenue, and marketing. The other half of my time was spent on student development initiatives related to the university’s Co-Curricular Learning Outcomes. Within the University Centers staff, I was responsible for leading team meetings, staff orientation, self-reflection reports, and career readiness advising meetings. Within the Student Affairs department, I co-led workshops and evaluated assessment data.

This academic year, I got a new position. I am currently the Graduate Assistant at the United Front Multicultural Commons (UFMC), the cross-cultural center on campus. The

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

UFMC's management team consists of one full-time professional staff member and two graduate assistants, including myself. We employ five student interns who work an average of 12 hours per week. Student responsibilities vary per position but in general their duties are related to the programming, marketing, outreach and community building of the center. As it pertains to professional development, I have access to several opportunities. First, I lead the UFMC team meetings which focus on identity and professional development. Secondly, I participate in the Joint Commons team meetings where all full-time professional staff, graduate assistants and student staff of The Commons -which include the UFMC, Women's Commons, LGBTQ+ and Allies Commons, and the Black Student Resource Commons- get together to discuss social justice and identity development topics. Lastly, I also participate and sometimes lead the All Professional Staff meetings where full-time professional staff and graduate assistants of The Commons discuss administrative tasks of the Commons along with professional and personal development.

Throughout my time as a Graduate Assistant at USD, I have been exposed to different aspects related to the organization and culture of the institution. In the fall of 2017, the Division of Student Affairs communicated that the division was going to work in a different way in order to be more student focused. The announcement also came with several changes within the human resources of the division such as change in employee roles and the creation of The Commons. From my observations, all of these changes created a high level of uncertainty and instability for both, supervisors and students. On one side, supervisors had to navigate the revamping of processes and the elimination or change of positions. On the other end, students experienced uncertainty and confusion as many gained new supervisors and lost their previous ones.

I have also learned about the culture of the higher education. As someone who had managerial experience in corporate America prior to switching careers to higher education, I had to suspend my preconceptions of the “correct” management style in order to be able to adapt to my new work environment. When I worked outside higher education, I learned to leave all of my social identities at the door which taught me to compartmentalize my personal and professional life. However, I observed that my fellow supervisors at USD showed up at work as their full selves. At first, I was completely confused by this style. How could I motivate and empower others if I speak about my flaws and the impact of my social identities? It was not until I discussed this matter with my then supervisor who encouraged me to step outside my comfort zone and bring my full self to work, especially when interacting with students. Since then, I continuously make it a purpose to speak about my social identities and how these have impacted my journey. I strongly believe that all these experiences and observations informed my research conducted within the Division of Student Affairs at USD.

Methodology

The method I used for this study was action research. This method is unique in that it creates a space for self-reflection while adding to the body of knowledge. Per McNiff and Whitehead (2011),

Action research in a form of enquiry that enables practitioners in every job and walk of life to investigate and evaluate their work...they produce their accounts of practice to show: (1) how they are trying to improve what they are doing...(2) how they try to influence others to do the same thing (pg. 7).

McNiff (2016) further elaborates, “the aim of an action research project is not to reach a successful closure or achieve externally imposed targets or ‘outcomes’; the aim is to show

personal and collective processes of learning with potential for generating personal theories of practice” (pg. 21). An action research project allows the researcher, the collaborators and the community, in this case the higher education community, to grow from the experience. For all of these reasons, I appreciated the opportunity to use a research method that perfectly aligns with my personal value of growth which is rooted in self-reflection.

Because action research varies significantly from positivist research, the validation process looks different than conventional forms of validation. According to McNiff (2016), positivist research usually leans on casual relationships to validate knowledge claims. This process is inadequate for action research since this method of research is formulated based on individual interpretations. McNiff further explains that action research involves several validation process such as 1) the negotiation of personal values with others, 2) own validation, 3) social validation, and 4) community validation (pg. 55-56). For this reason, to ensure that my positionality and values do not overshadow my knowledge claims, I leaned on my critical friends and research advisor throughout this process.

Within action research, there are several methods one can use. I used the action-reflection cycle from McNiff and Whitehead which was last modified in 2010. As the below image reflect (figure 1.1), this type of action research creates a space for the researcher to observe the environment, reflect on the observations, act on a plan based on the observations, evaluate the data collected while acting on the plan, modify future plans as things arise, and finally to move in new directions for future cycles.

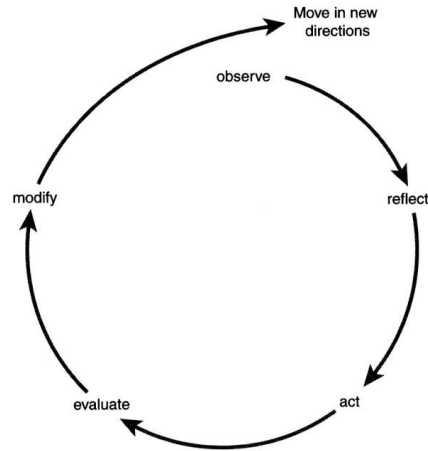


Figure 1.1 An action-reflection cycle by McNiff and Whitehead (last modified in 2010)

Furthermore, within the action research method, there are different interlevel dynamics that come at play. For Coghlan and Brannick (2005), individual level research, also referred to as first-person research, aims to understand the linkage between an individual and the organization (pg. 109). They also state that group level research, also known as second-person research, involves engaging others in the research conversation and action (pg. 110). Lastly, for Coghlan and Brannick, groups do not work on their own. For this reason, there is an interdependence between groups (pg. 111). Considering the nature of my research questions, these levels showed up throughout the different cycles of my action research project.

Cycle Descriptions

The following section will describe the three cycles completed for this study.

Cycle One: The student experience. In this cycle, I aimed to learn from undergraduate students about their experiences working on-campus. I interviewed some of the students I supervised last year and to held focus groups with student employees within the Division of Student Affairs. My goal was to understand the strategies and managerial approaches used by fellow supervisors and myself to help students build career-readiness competencies. The insights

gathered in cycle allowed me to better tailor the questions for cycle two. This cycle was completed in the fall of 2018.

Cycle Two: The supervisor experience. In this cycle, I wanted to learn from supervisors about their experiences supervising undergraduate student employees. I interviewed full-time professional staff and graduate assistants within the Division of Student Affairs. My goal was to understand their managerial style when working with students and the institutional support they receive for the professional development of student employees. The insights gathered in this cycle informed the questions in cycle three. I completed this cycle in February 2019.

Cycle Three: The institutional experience. In this third and final cycle, I learned from professional staff throughout campus related to student employment and career readiness. I interviewed staff from the Student Employment Office within the Office of Financial Aid to learn about their involvement in the onboarding and performance evaluation of student employees. Additionally, I interviewed staff from the Career Development Center to better understand the struggles they see in students speaking to their work experience on-campus. Lastly, I interviewed staff involved in the student and staff development within the Division of Student Affairs to learn about the previous, current and future student development initiatives. In this cycle, I also reviewed information on the USD website related to student employment. I completed this cycle on March 2019.

As one can see, I only used qualitative research methods for this action research project. As Emily J. Perl and Denise F. Noldon (2000) identify, qualitative methods give voice to those who get ignored by quantitative methods and allow the researcher to be part of the research methodology (pg. 42). As one can see, both of these strengths apply to my project. Since there is not enough literature that speaks about the experiences of student employees outside of libraries

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

and recreational facilities, the focus groups and interviews I conducted provided insights about the perceived value of on-campus employment at the USD. Additionally, considering that action research is self-reflective in nature, it aligns with the ability for the researcher, in this case myself, to be part of the method.

On the other end, Perl and Noldon (2000) identified that qualitative methods are time-consuming and not replicable (pg. 45). Going into this project, I was aware of these two challenges. The process was indeed time-consuming as proven by the time it took to transcribe all focus groups and interviews. Moreover, I understand that the findings are unique to my social identities and the context of USD. With this being said, though my action research cannot be entirely replicated, it is my hope the findings can be useful to the student affairs community, especially professionals of color.

Needs Assessment

I am about to complete my second year supervising college students. Since I started my career in higher education, my goal was to make the students' job experience as rewarding as possible by challenging them with projects and providing constructive feedback. I thought about every single supervisor that has helped me become a better professional and tried several things I learned from them. Comparing my very first individual meeting with one of the students that I used to supervise and my most recent one, I can see improvements. I know my professional journey within student affairs is just starting; reason why, I will use the findings of this study to implement strategies and take actions that help me become a better supervisor that helps students build career readiness within on-campus employment.

Additionally, prior to going into this project, I was curious to see how supervisors approached career readiness with their student staff. As previously mentioned, I organized and lead student development workshops for all student staff within the Division of Student Affairs. While reviewing the number of student participants per department, I noticed that, unfortunately, not every department hit the forecasted attendance rate which made me wonder if every department had different expectations regarding the development of their student staff. This observation aligns with David Frock's study (2015) which found that even though higher education supervisors have mentoring traits, they are often not given a formal expectation or rewarded for any student developmental initiatives (Frock, 2015). This study allowed me to identify the different approaches used by supervisors which confirmed that student's employment experience will be dependent on the supervisor's career readiness approach.

From my combined observations between last and this year, students struggle to speak about their on-campus job experience outside of the university. One of these struggles is to link the work they do on-campus with their professional goals. This is particularly true whenever the on-campus job is completely unrelated with their future professional goals. For example, the engineering students would find it challenging to identify the transferable skills learned while setting up conference rooms with a team that could apply to their future profession. Another struggle is that students find it challenging to speak in terms that can be understood outside of higher education. Many of the students I have supervised are not interested in working in higher education. For this reason, they struggle to use a vocabulary that would resonate with people working outside of academia. For example, using the word programming outside of higher education might be perceived as software programming and not event planning.

Additionally, from my observations, not all students have the same level of motivation regarding their on-campus job. For many of them, the job is a job that pays and allows them to do some homework. For this reason, I believe that many students are missing out on the opportunity to maximize their on-campus job experience, especially when their job is not entirely related to the students' professional goals. Ideally, I would like most students to speak confidently about the competencies that they have developed while working on-campus in order for them to be better prepared for interviews and their professional journeys.

Prior to embarking on this journey, I did some preliminary work. First, I got familiarized with the human resources laws and processes as it pertains to student staff by reviewing all available documents and asking questions to professional staff. Moreover, with the reorganization that the Division of Student Affairs is currently undergoing, I confirmed that a sub-committee was created to evaluate the initiatives related to the student and staff professional development.

Cycle One: The Student Experience

Overview

I will first explain the original plan for this cycle and then provide an actual execution of this cycle. As previously mentioned, my goal was to understand the strategies and managerial approaches used by fellow supervisors and myself to help students build career readiness competencies. I wanted to hear from the students' voice about their experience working on campus and how supervisors have increased their career readiness. My original plan was to interview the student employees I supervised in the past and hold focus groups with student employees within the Division of Student Affairs by the end of the 2018 fall semester. I ended up completing this cycle in November 2018. I interviewed two out of the three students I supervised

last year and asked them five questions related to my managerial practices in helping them build career readiness (see exhibit A for list of questions). Due to human resources laws, I was not able to access the list of all student staff within the Division of Student Affairs to invite them to participate in my focus groups. For this reason, I leaned on my professional network to identify student employees within the division. I ended up having a total of six participants (see appendix B for demographics) for my focus groups, five in one focus group and one in the other one due to last minute cancellations. In these focus groups, I asked them three questions related to practices used or currently being used by supervisors to increase their career readiness. I also had participants complete on their own a worksheet with three sections. For section one, participants had to identify their level of proficiency for each of the seven NACE competencies. For section two, participants had to identify their current job duties and the NACE competencies needed to complete these duties. The final section had the participants link the current competencies they are developing at work with their future career path (see exhibit B for worksheet). After the participants were done completing the form, I asked them three questions related to the format and the timing of filling it out.

Cycle One Findings

The three overall themes that arose in this cycle are divided into supervisory characteristics, student experience and institutional culture. See exhibit D for a summary of findings.

Supervisory characteristics. The first sub-theme identified was related to feedback frequency and type. From the insights provided, students mentioned that supervisors helped them increase their career readiness by providing clear, constant and thorough feedback at the task and the institutional level. Several examples were given of a time when supervisors provided very

specific feedback about a singular task. For example, the following quote from a participant highlights the growth they experience by their supervisor proofreading their emails: “...I feel like [this is] helping me be more professional.” Another example was in regards to reviewing emails and flyers which makes the student become more detail-oriented:

For my supervisor she revises my work a lot so it’s like making sure that it is at its most eloquent level if it is an email or like the proper way to send it out or if it is even a flyer making sure it is inclusive not too much but not too little it has to be the right level for what you expect for our job.

Outside of the task-oriented feedback, supervisors are helping students see the big picture as well. The following quote is an example of how a supervisor applied systems leadership theory to a student’s project:

I think that one of the things that my supervisor is doing and that I am very grateful for it is that she is checking me in the language that I use and that you have to work through certain channels at work to get what you need...I’m thankful for that.

Though individual feedback was something I was expecting to be mentioned, I was happy to hear that supervisors are putting things into context and talking with students about the systems that impact their work.

Another sub-theme that arose within supervisory characteristics is the type of support level. Students strongly appreciate a supervisor that is approachable and friendly. The following comment speaks to the appreciation for having a supervisor that cares and respects students:

If anything I am thankful for my current supervisors.....I have had several supervisors that are of varying professionalism and respect levels. Having this good medium of professionalism but still friendly and able to communicate with me is very nice.

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

On the other end, while students appreciate an approachable and friendly supervisor, they also want to be supported professionally, especially when working with campus partners. A couple of students spoke to their longing for supervisors to show professional support:

Something that I have observed in the space where I work is the level of support I receive from supervisors is for me specifically is more of the emotional kind of level and I don't appreciate that all the time...I want to feel supported a different way. For example if my supervisor could push back when I want to do something but they are like oh we will get push back from the institution well can you support by pushing back yourself.

Another comment made about this matter:

...so I think that whole idea of supporting us beyond oh how are you today would be really nice because if you are coming to us with a project or an idea or if we are coming to you in general you should be able to help us with the actual aspects of the institution we are working at its like professionally and not emotionally yeah I'm here for you but you are kind of standoffish.

These insights show that as supervisors we must find the right balance between supporting and challenging. I also think that these insights show the opportunity to discuss the different layers of higher education and the impact on rolling out projects. Failure to doing this, it could be perceived as lack of support.

Student Work Experience. The first sub-theme that arose within this main theme is related to previous work experience. For many students, their on-campus employment is their first office job. For this reason, many might get confused about the level of professionalism needed while working at USD. A student spoke about her transition working in the food industry to working at USD:

There is a difference between a restaurant job and an office job. Definitely the professionalism level is different there is more professionalism in the restaurant job because you are visible to the public instead of being in the office when you are secluded and you can relax you don't really go out and about all the time like you are not really seen to the public audience. Compared to the restaurant where people come by all the time.

As someone who has professional work experience outside of higher education, I found this insight very telling. This quote shows that students perceive the work environment within higher education to be laid back which might not be the work environment they will experience in their jobs after college. For this reason, I think it is important to talk about the organizational culture of higher education and how professionalism looks like in other places. On the contrary, the students might experience a professional shock.

The second sub-theme identified in this cycle is related to the lack of awareness of NACE competencies. After students completed the career development worksheet during the focus groups (see exhibit C for worksheet), they seemed unaware of these competencies and seemed confused by how little these are spoken about, especially when applying to jobs. They did appreciate the exercise to help them identify their strongest competencies and the ones they need to work on. Here are some reactions to completing the worksheet: "I think the form is really helpful to just pinpoint what we experience on the day to day or lack of and vice versa." Another student spoke to the most beneficial time frame for completing this form: "I think that using this at the beginning of employment and filling it out yourself and giving it to your employer and then having your employer fill it out."

Institutional Culture. The first sub-theme identified is related to the classification of Federal Work-Study (FWS). Students perceive FWS jobs to be much easier to obtain than typical jobs. A student shared that because work-study is based on the financial aid package, he thought these types of jobs would be easier to get. However, from his perception, the hiring process was unnecessarily extremely complex. Here you will find his description of the situation:

...I've had over 6 years of experience working... I had to submit an application, resume...but then the day of the interview they had me fill out another form to write about myself...the only reason why I got this job was because I need those \$3,000 for work-study...especially because they cut the Perkins loan...So when they told me to apply to work-study I'm look cool it's going to be easy...no it was a pain.

As these insights show, the conflicting expectations of obtaining a FWS job created frustration for this student. Unfortunately, since there is not a standardized onboarding process, this student might not be the only one confused by the whole process.

The second sub-theme identified is related to the organizational culture. The complex structure and strong hierarchy of higher education is present at USD. The experience of students of color working at USD, a predominantly-White institution (PWI), is an introduction of the social justice dynamics they will face after graduation. All of the students that participated in the focus groups identified as students of color. For this reason, I noticed that their experiences as student employees overlaps with their experiences as students. Considering that USD is a PWI, students of color are hyper aware of the overall lack of diversity at USD. For this reason, the lack of representation at the professional staff level impacts their experience as employees as well.

The following student refers to this matter:

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

It's like a coworker of mine said that he's very thankful that USD has helped him realize what the world it's going to be because the world is predominantly white people in power and you kinda have to deal with that and you are kinda dealing with that in any kind of situation with any supervisor because it tends to be not always people of color if they may be they still have someone higher that is kinda pushing them down.

A couple of comments spoke to the fact that students are observing the behaviors of professional staff, especially the staff of color. Here are the insights from a student employee:

...in order for us to succeed as people of color we need to get there first and then dismantle things from the top and so what I hear a lot of us saying especially for me want to see someone who is part of the marginalized group who has some kind of power and not use it is upsetting.

Here are the insights of another student who transferred from another institution that was not PWI:

...[my previous institution] was a lot more relaxed and a lot more people of color it's one of the most diverse campuses and going from that to this it was a big change..[supervisors of color] are still here but I think there is a level of respect that you have to earn from them first...I feel like especially being a woman of color at USD it is something that I constantly feel.

Lessons Learned from Cycle One

From this cycle, I took away the fact that students respond well and need constant feedback and support. During my managerial years in the for-profit sector, I developed a hands-off approach when supervising others. Unlike the adult employees I used to supervise prior to switching careers to higher education, undergraduate student employees might have zero

experience working in an office setting, a reason why they need more guidance. Therefore, they might not know how to complete a task successfully. I would perceive constant check-ins as a form of micromanagement which is a practice I do not use. However, in this context, constant check-ins might be the best way for me to build the professional competencies they will need in the future. After this cycle, I did become more cognizant of my feedback frequency to students.

Unlike corporate America, I noticed that the kind of supervision within higher education, especially for student employees, is very different. In corporate America, it is typical to hide all emotions and social identities. However, the culture of higher education encourages everyone to bring their whole selves to school and work. From the insights given by students, it seems like as student affairs professionals, we err on the side of extra caring for their personal well-being more than helping them develop professionally. For this reason, I still think this is a fine balance that we as supervisors within higher education need to find when working with student employees to maximize their on-campus employment.

This cycle also reiterated my observation that students are not being exposed to the career readiness competencies employers seek in college graduates. The lack of awareness of these competencies might be why they struggle to connect their job on-campus with their professional goals. I also think that higher education uses a very particular vocabulary which would need to be translated for other industries. For this reason, as a supervisor and someone with several years of full-time professional experience, it would be important for me to inform students of these competencies and create spaces of reflection to make sense of their professional experiences.

Lastly, this cycle made me think of my supervisory role as a woman of color. When I first started working in higher education, I wanted to always appear to have it all figured out in order to inspire and motivate others, especially students of color. However, I learned the hard

way that this is impossible and actually makes me less approachable and relatable to students, especially students of color. Though some days are easier than others, I try to be as authentic as possible and be able to speak about my experiences. The insights I heard in this cycle reminded me of the importance of speaking of my experience as a graduate student and professional staff of color at a PWI with students in order to provide another level of support.

Cycle Two: The Supervisor Experience

Overview

I will first explain the original plan for this cycle and then provide an actual execution of this cycle. My goal for this cycle was to understand the managerial style and experiences of full-time professional staff and graduate assistants when supervising student employees, and the institutional support they receive for the professional development of student employees. My plan was to use focus groups for this cycle to listen to as many voices as possible and have this cycle done by February 2019. This cycle went more or less as planned. Similarly to the roadblock I experienced on the previous cycle, I was not able to obtain a list of all supervisors of student staff within the Division of Student Affairs due to human resources policies. For this reason, I once again leaned on my professional network to invite participants. I had a total of seven supervisors participate in this cycle. The first focus group had four full-time professionals. The second one had two full-time professionals and the third focus group had two graduate assistants. One full-time professional was not able to attend the focus group but answered the questions on an individual meeting with me (see exhibit E for participant details). I purposefully chose not to have full-time professional staff members and graduate assistants in the same focus groups to prevent dynamics of formal authority to impact the responses. I used the same six questions for all focus groups. The questions addressed topics such as onboarding process,

challenges in working with student employees, and institutional support they receive (see exhibit F for the list of questions).

Cycle Two Findings

I identified two themes within this cycle: individual approach and institutional processes. See exhibit G for a summary of findings.

Individual Approach. Now that I have heard from students about their need for feedback, I wanted to understand the practices used by supervisors to provide feedback. Per the insights provided, students receive performance feedback in several ways: 1) individual meetings, 2) weekly/biweekly/monthly team meetings, 3) peer feedback, 4) on-the-spot feedback, 5) semester performance evaluations, and 6) 360 feedback. As these options show, there seems to be a good mix of informal and formal ways to provide feedback along with the role of the feedback giver (peer vs. supervisor).

Within feedback, I found that supervisors use performance feedback and reflection to connect work with academics and professional goals. In regards to performance feedback, supervisors are using coaching techniques. The following comment speaks to this process when closing the feedback loop about a programming initiative:

“Project based coaching as they work on something... after a program to talk about ok what did we learn? How did it go and how could it have been improved?”

As one can see, open-ended questions and prompt follow-up are incorporated into the coaching techniques. With this being said, I wonder how much this method would resonate with students who process learning experiencing differently such as by journaling or drawing.

Outside of performance feedback, I wanted to understand the different methods used by supervisors to help students connect the dots between their on-campus employment and their

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

professional goals. One of the methods mentioned by supervisors was individual coaching. The following comment illustrates how a supervisor helps students speak about their on-campus experience:

For me that's how I prepare them for what they want to do after graduation because I know that most of my students don't want to go into student affairs work but that doesn't mean that I cannot help them. For me it is about finding out what they need to improve on before they graduate and helping them improve on that.

The second method mentioned was aligning their passions with their work either before or after hiring. A supervisor spoke about the fact that their office only hires student employees who have majors related to the work done in the office:

We are trying to recruit students who are interested in wellness and wellness field whether that is pre-med or interested in psychology or clinical work so that they can really be able to help connect what they are learning and what they are looking for towards graduate school jobs outside of undergrad

Another supervisor spoke to how to channel the students' passions after hiring:

We do a lot of passion planning so we center what they will do with what they are passionate about so we really try to map out what they go to school for and what they want to do in the future. And that's how we get them to motivate to align their goals with their passions.

The third method mentioned was informal career advising. The following supervisor described how she discussed the student's chosen major:

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

One of my interns right now who wants to go to med school and kinda talking with him a little bit more about this reasons for going to med school are not so much driven behind the science or the medicine is more around wanting to go into communities and help. Another example of career advising is helping students apply some of the content learned at work with their future professional goals:

Thinking about a student who was an accounting major who her experience here shifted the places that she was debating working based on what they would be able to offer in regards to experiences regarding gender equity so those are examples of I am looking for certain things within an organization.

As all of these three methods show, it seems like supervisors are being intentional about connecting the dots for students. It was interesting to me that many of these methods were not mentioned by the students. The absence of this connection could be related to what Sarah Hansen and Beth Hoag (2018) referred to as the lack of alignment and/or structured transfer of learning (pg. 887-88). Hansen & Hoag explain that unless there is an intentional structure to align work with their career goals, students might not be able to make the connections. Since all the methods mentioned in this study are done organically and informally, it could potentially be that students' learning within campus employment is not easily recallable because the connections are not done structurally and consistently.

Outside of feedback and transferability of learning, I also noticed that supervisors saw students as students first. A common challenge that supervisors spoke to was the competing priorities of student employees and the low priority they give to their on-campus job as proven by the constant work scheduling changes (reschedules and absences) and the presence of

homework while working. A few comments expressed the internal conflict of being supportive but also holding students accountable:

Participant A: ...[I want] to be someone to be supportive obviously acknowledges that their academics come first and then there's a whole plethora of activities that you are involved in but where do we draw the line?

Participant B: It is something that is competing with other things for top spot in the priority list so for me it is as a supervisor the expectation is that they treat this as an actual...but for them that is not always the case a lot of times their top priority is their student organization that they involved with, their fraternity or sorority, another job...

Moreover, many supervisors see on-campus employment as an opportunity to grow more than to perform. Many supervisors showed training in student development, reason why they focus on the overall development of students with the hope that it would impact the professional development of student employee. Some even shared that they witness behaviors that would not be appropriate in a full-time job, such as sleeping while on the clock, but instead create a space of reflection to talk about the “why” of falling asleep while working. As the following comments display, it seems like many supervisors focus on the overall personal development of students instead on developing career readiness competencies:

Participant C: I have two core tensions around student staff as opposed to supervising full time employees or professional. One is that I am more invested in student learning and development then their work and in relationship to that at the same time I am very interested in the quality of work that comes out of the space so how to be student driven and empower around what they produce while actually helping them through

Participant D: In student affairs I think we put such an emphasis on trying to create the role to be a role that they grow in and they can make mistakes and be more patient...at least in our department the expectations are that they are here to learn and that they don't come in with a lot of experience so there will be more hiccups and work through that.

Participant E: Trying to focus on our student employees of whether we allow them to shine in the sense of where a strengths focused approach of you are strong in this area and we will continue to develop it or really challenging them in areas that they may not be as strong as but allowing that learning curve to happen

As all these insights show, supervisors seem to be conflicted between treating the on-campus job as a real job and seeing the employment as an opportunity for personal development. Though I think that both of these aspects are intertwined, it seems like at times the job performance is compromised by the opportunities for personal growth.

Institutional Processes. The first sub-theme identified pertains to the variability of training, meaning that training is unique to the office or department. There were several commonalities during the onboarding process. First, supervisors are leaning as much as possible on technology to store training documents and information to make sure it is as updated as possible. Secondly, many supervisors plan team retreats. Thirdly, supervisors set goals and expectations at this point. Lastly, supervisors lean on peer trainers and shadowing shifts.

The uniqueness of onboarding is related to the actual job duties of the position. For example, the following quote shows how a supervisor within an identity center incorporates identity development to their onboarding: "I would say that most of what we do around onboarding focuses far more on the developmental goals particularly on identity development and values clarification even like how do these values inform the way we organize."

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

Other supervisors in spaces with heavy programming focus more on team building considering that the job forces student employees to work in teams as shown by the following comment: “We also do semesterly trainings that will get together all of the student employees all together and really focus on team building.” Other supervisors become very topic oriented such as wellness or commuter student experiences. The training of all of these aspects happens at the beginning and throughout the tenure of the student employee. As these insights show, though certain training technology and structure is used amongst departments, the training curriculum is different.

The second sub-theme is related to the prioritization of professional development. A total of seven offices were represented in the participants and each of them spoke to different professional development opportunities such as team meeting topics, outside conferences, on- and off-campus events, individual coaching and partnering with the Career Development Center at USD. The resource most supervisors spoke to was the staff development initiatives within the Division of Student Affairs. These initiatives are related to the Co-Curricular Learning Outcomes at the university and take form in semester workshops for all student staff. Additionally, no one spoke about a specific budget allocated to professional development opportunities which can certainly impact the motivation and resources needed to focus on this matter.

Lessons Learned from Cycle Two

One major key takeaway from this cycle is the differentiation between personal and professional development. At one end, and this is something student affairs professionals know very well, is the student development that happens in college. This development is related to the student’s values, ways of knowing and actions. At the other end, and this is something that perhaps career counselors or even career coaches know best, is the professional development of

employees. This is related to career readiness that help students build those NACE competencies which will help them be successful in their lives after college.

Considering that we are not compartmentalized individuals, it is understandable that personal and professional development overlap. I think that it is important for me to create spaces of reflection for both. For example, in my individual meetings with supervisees, I can apply my understanding of student development theory when supporting students outside of their job duties. Then, when discussing work tasks and providing feedback about performance, I can then apply those competencies and connect their work with their future goals. Personally, I think I have gotten so used to wearing the professional development hat that it has been a learning process to balance both. This cycle certainly reminded me of the importance of both, especially when supervising within higher education.

Another key takeaway is the lack of consistency across the university as it pertains to student employment. From the onboarding process to the training to the professional development resources, even within the same division, it seems like not every student is getting the same employment experience. While it is understandable that certain aspects of the employment would be different due to the job duties, this cycle reiterated the challenge of unifying the student employment experience. Still, I think it merits discussion to think about how to bring the university's mission and values to student employment in a consistent matter.

Cycle Three: The Institutional Experience

Overview

I will first explain the original plan and then provide an actual execution of this cycle. My goal for this last cycle was to learn from campus partners about their perceptions and involvement in the student employment and career readiness at USD. One of the offices I

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

planned to learn from was the Career Development Center considering that I am using the career readiness definition by NACE. I also wanted to learn from the Student Employment Office since they are involved in student employment, especially for Federal Work-Study positions.

Moreover, I wanted to learn from the staff responsible for the student development initiatives within the Division of Student Affairs since I am focusing in this division. Outside of these individual interactions, I wanted to review all information on the USD website related to student employment. I planned to have this cycle completed by March 2019. This cycle went as planned for the most part. I ended up completing three individual interviews where I asked six unique questions. The first interview was with a full-time professional within Career Development Center. The questions were regarding any efforts for the professional development of student employees (see exhibit H for list of questions). The second interview was with a full-time staff member within the Student Employment Office. The questions were related to training requirements, employment challenges and future goals of the office (see exhibit I for a list of questions). Lastly, the third interview with a full-time staff member within the Division of Student Affairs who works on the staff development initiatives. The questions were to designed to help me understand the current taskforce for staff development and the challenges experienced in the past (see exhibit J for a list of questions). Aside from these interviews, I reviewed eight different resources on the USD website related to student employment.

Cycle Three Findings

Lack of universality. The experience of student employees is dependent on the department in which they work. Starting with the onboarding process, each department has a different way to bring students on board. The only universal process I identified within onboarding was the specific employment paperwork that all student employees need to complete

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

such as the W-9, I-9, confidential employee information and background check. Outside from this, the onboarding experience of student employees is different starting with the job classification. The onboarding is handled by the Student Employment Office (SEO) for all Federal Work-Study positions whereas Human Resources handles all Casual-Worker positions. When it comes to marketing for the positions, some departments post a very detailed job description when advertising open positions whereas other departments post a very general job description. Exhibit K shows a couple of job posts within the Division of Student Affairs. The level of detail between both job posts is different. The Campus Recreation job post looks more like a job post one could find on any given job board. Additionally, some departments might create flyers or give internal announcements to get jobs.

Once the job has been posted, the interviewing and training process is unique to each department. Some departments conduct full interviews whereas others hire on the spot. When it comes to training, there is not a mandatory job training required for either supervisors or student employees. In speaking with the Student Employment Office (SEO), I learned that the office hosts one training in August which is highly encouraged but not mandatory. During this training, supervisors mostly learn about the compliance piece of hiring and working with FWS students (hour tracking, federal regulations, etc.) The training also includes a small portion of topics related to performance reviews, handling conflict and bad attitude. As the SEO study participant mentioned, the structure of this training is based on the heavy regulation from the government on student employment. The interviewee said: “there are a lot of concrete rules and it’s different than if you hire a casual worker because you are not working with federal money, you are working with university money.” As this quote indicates, it is totally understandable that the majority of the training is spent on understanding and following FWS regulations. Unfortunately,

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

it does not seem like there are any other trainings for professional staff members that focus on the career readiness of student employees from any departments on campus.

On the student side, students are not required to attend any training from SEO or Human Resources except for the FERPA training when applicable. The SEO has a student guide document available on their website that goes over technical information such as wages, dress code and hiring paperwork; and professional development information such as adjusting to working styles and resolving conflict. During my interview with the SEO, the professional staff member mentioned that they rely on each department to provide the necessary training for student employees. They have noticed for example that the training looks different across campus. The following insights speak to this observation: “some of the departments have larger amount of students, the library is one, campus recreation is one. And so there are a lot of students but there are also a full time staff supervising them and so they’ve developed a lot of organized training.” For this reason, student employees do not have a campus-wide training that goes over basic technical information such as wages, time-off, or institutional policies. Unfortunately, unless their supervisor addresses this information, there could be a potential information gap.

Moreover, continuous training looks different depending on the department. In talking with the professional staff member within the Division of Student Affairs, it was mentioned that some departments focus more on the technical aspect of the job—like making a good latte. Whereas others focus more on the student development aspect—like values clarification. Historically, there have been initiatives to address the personal development of students leaning with the Co-Curricular Learning Outcomes of the division. While some departments had great student attendance, some others did not. The following comment shows that whenever there has

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

been institutional support, meaning students get paid for attending, the participation of these initiatives was higher:

Three years ago, we ...put in place a cycle of student develop trainings for student employees related to vocation and empathy which are connected to our CCLOs. Student were mandated to attend...a large percentage did. They were compensated for that time and training. So that was a level of investment. A year and a half later, we did that cycle again, it was without that same level of institutional mandate and there was far less participation...it was around 33% if I remember correctly.

As these insights show, having the financial support from the institution to fund trainings during the student employment significantly impacts participation.

Good intentions. USD as an institution wants to maximize student employment but has competing priorities. Throughout this cycle there were several comments/observations made regarding the desire to improve the experience of student employment. For example, when I spoke to the SEO, they spoke to their desire to streamline the hiring paperwork, improve their annual training, and online documentation. They additionally want to collaborate more with the Career Development Center regarding off-campus jobs since currently they get posted on a physical board outside the SEO space which is not reaching all students.

Additionally, I learned that there is currently a committee in charge of evaluating the development of student employees, staff and graduate assistants. Though many ideas have been proposed, there is no implementation timeline because of the several competing priorities of the university at this point in time. In the interview, projects such as StriveTo2024 and the Renaissance Plan were mentioned as major initiatives currently worked at USD impacting Student Affairs.

Moreover, in speaking with the Career Development Center, they mentioned the fact that Career Counselors collaborate with departments on campus to help their student leaders and employees to professionally speak about their role on-campus. I first heard of this collaboration in cycle two when speaking with supervisors. Outside of this effort, all career readiness programs are related to student academics: the School of Business has the Passport Program, the College of Arts & Sciences has the Compass Program and the Shiley-Marcos School of Engineering has the Connect Program. All of these programs aim to connect academics with their professional growth by requiring activities like internships, networking functions, meeting with Career Counselors, etcetera.

Lessons Learned from Cycle Three

This cycle reminded me of the complexity of working in an industry that is extremely departmentalized. Though the insights from this cycle showed care for the topic of student employment, I did not notice a centralized initiative that requires campus-wide collaboration. Even though USD is a medium-sized institution, it seems as though each department handles student employment differently which creates different experiences within the institution. For this reason, I can see why the experience of a student working in the Torero Store will be very different from the experience of a student working in the Women's Commons. Though all departments carry the values of the institution and the Culture of Care, the implementation of how this looks like is different across the board.

Secondly, this cycle reminded me of the importance of showing data to make a case. At the institutional level, other than showing the number of student employees, or the budget spent on student employees, or the Student Affairs training participation percentage of student employees, to the best of my knowledge, there is not an institutional assessment that tracks the

benefits of student employment within USD. With all of the changes within the institution, I can see how it would be difficult to focus on student employment. However, if there is data that were to link career readiness initiatives within student employment with student retention and success, it would be easier to receive the institutional support to invest more in the ongoing training of student employees.

Limitations

I want to acknowledge the few limitations of my study. First, though the attempt was made, I was not able to gather participants within the department of Auxiliary Services (AS). The handful that were invited expressed having a heavy workload. At USD, the AS department falls within the Division of Student Affairs. Unlike many departments in this division, AS is a revenue-making department, meaning that they are expected to hit certain financial goals and they are not able to hire students with Federal Work-Study. The AS department includes the Torero Store, hospitality services, campus card, mail center, dining, UC Ticket Office, university copy, U.S. Bank, vending and Zipcar (“Auxiliary Services Departments,” n.d.) Because the wages of student employees directly impact the overall profit of the department, I wanted to learn more about their perceptions and struggles as it pertains to career readiness within their student employment practices.

Another limitation is the lack of variation within the participants. On the student side, most participants work in identity centers. Because the nature and the work environment of their jobs is very unique to the rest of the departments, I wonder if the same themes would arise if I would have heard from student employees in other departments. For example, I wonder if other student employees who identify as students of color also share the same experiences as the participants in this study. On the supervisor side, all of the supervisors who participated in this

study are very passionate about student development because they have a student affairs background. However, I wonder which themes would have arose if I would have incorporated supervisors with different educational and professional backgrounds.

Recommendations

The findings from this study suggest that USD as an institution has very decentralized efforts regarding the maximization of student employment. For this reason, based on the insights from all three cycles, in the long-term, I recommend developing a career readiness program for student employment within the Division of Student Affairs. Considering that there are currently working committees focused on the student and staff development within the division, I would leverage this effort to spearhead the initiative. I recommend to partner with Career Development Center to learn from their experience in running the three successful career readiness programs on campus. I also recommend to partner with the Student Employment Office to review the performance reviews of all students within the division to identify any themes that could help with the program development. From here, I would create the specifics of the career readiness program such as learning outcomes, assessment, logistic details, cost of program, and roll out timeline.

Considering that developing a divisional effort could take time, in the meantime, I strongly recommend creating a standardized training for student employees based on the NACE competencies. First, this would expose students to the needs of future employers. Second, it would allow them to connect their on-campus job with their professional goals. Third, it would create a common ground for students and supervisors when working together. Moreover, this training would connect them to our Career Development Center in a different way to support their retention and success.

I also recommend offering ongoing workshops for all supervisors of student employees. Per the insights gathered in this study, it seems like many supervisors are already using strategies and practices to boost career readiness. Unfortunately, supervisors might be unaware of these unless it comes up during informal conversations. During cycle two, supervisors expressed interest in learning from what the other supervisors were doing. For this reason, the workshops would be created by peers to peers. I envision a rotational lunch meeting where supervisors share about their practices and outcomes. Not only would these workshops support the professional development of staff, but it could also create a sense of community and belonging amongst staff which is related to goal number four of the Envisioning 2024 strategic plan: “Elevating Faculty & Staff Engagement.”

Outside of these institutional recommendations, I also have some recommendations for fellow student affairs professionals who supervise undergraduate students. First, regardless of the incentives from the institution, it is important to keep career readiness at the forefront of our working relationship with students. Personally, this study reminded me of the importance of creating spaces of reflection for myself and the students that I work with to connect on-campus employment with their professional goals and to do so in a formal and structured way. Additionally, this study highlights the importance of balancing the personal and professional development of students. Though we might be conflicted by holding students more accountable for their job performance and addressing behaviors that would not be accepted outside the university, it is necessary we do so. Contrary, we are not building our students to be successful professionals. Moreover, it reminded me of the importance of cultivating relationships with campus partners to support the career readiness of student workers. Through very intentional

workshops, students can receive support from the Career Development Center as it pertains to their on-campus job.

Another recommendation is specifically for my fellow student affairs professionals of color. In order for students to learn how to advocate within the social systems that exist in this world, it is important to be open about the experiences of staff of color, especially at a predominantly-White institution. As cycle one showed, students of color are watching the behaviors and interactions of staff, especially staff of color. For this reason, unless dialogue is created to address the different systematic layers of a situation, actions could be misconstrued and perceived as unsupportive. Moreover, as we ask students to show up as their authentic selves, we also must hold these words true at all times. It is easy to fall into the systems at play, reason why we have to always develop a support system within the institution to bring us back to ourselves.

Conclusion

This study further confirmed my passion for maximizing student employment in higher education. At the individual level, the study provided some practices that can aid the development of career readiness of the student employees I supervise, such as providing detailed and thorough feedback, creating formal spaces of reflection to connect on-campus employment with professional goals and balancing professional and personal development. Moreover, as a woman of color, the study reminded me of the importance to speak of my social identities with the students that I work with, especially students of color, in order to unpack the systematic oppression we might experience at the institution; and to remain authentic in my leadership at all times. At the institutional level, the study showed that USD as an institution is not unified when it comes to maximizing on-campus student employment. Though all of the good intentions exist,

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

we are still far from creating a unanimous stand on this topic. Additionally, this study provided me some insights about the complexity of creating change and incorporating new practices within higher education such as the compartmentalization of initiatives, importance of campus partners and prioritization of assessment tools.

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Appendix A: In-person Interview with Ticket Office Student Staff

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. The purpose of our interview is for me to understand the actions I took last year while being your supervisor that helped your professional development. I have here your signed consent form so please let me know if you would like to review it prior to getting started. Additionally, let me know of any questions or if you would like to stop the interview at any time. All answers will be anonymous.

1. Why did you choose to work at the UC Ticket Office?
2. Were you satisfied with your employment experience last year? If so or if not, why?
3. What skills/competencies do you feel like you improved on last year while working in the Ticket Office?
4. What was your favorite thing about having me as supervisor?
5. What is one thing you wish I could have done better last year?
6. As a supervisor, what three words would you choose to describe me?

Thank you very much for all your answers. Are there any other thoughts or insights you would like to share prior to concluding our meeting?

Appendix B: Demographics, Focus Groups in Cycle One

Participant	Class Standing	Office of Employment
Participant 1	First-year	The Commons
Participant 2	Second-year	The Commons
Participant 3	Second-year	Ethical and Restorative Office
Participant 4	Fourth-year	The Commons
Participant 5	First-year	The Commons
Participant 6	Third-year	The Commons

Appendix C: Focus Group with Student Staff

Thank you everyone for participating in today's focus group. The purpose today is to reflect on your career readiness and the role of your supervisor to maximize your on-campus employment. If at any given point you no longer wish to participate, please feel free to leave the conference room. This action will not impact your employment in any way. Just as a friendly reminder, today's focus group will be audiotaped and all insights will be anonymously reported, meaning that I will use pseudonyms. Any questions before we get started?

We will first start by having you fill out a worksheet on your own and then complete an activity as a group. For today's conversation, we are using the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) definition of career readiness: "career readiness is the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace." NACE identified seven competencies related to career readiness: critical thinking/problem solving, oral/written communications, teamwork/collaboration, digital technology, leadership, professionalism/work ethic, career management and global/intercultural competency. Every year, NACE conducts a survey with students to assess their proficiency in each of the seven competencies and with employers to assess the proficiency they see in college graduates for each of the seven competencies. As the table on your worksheet shows, there are large discrepancies. For this reason, with this study, my goal is to learn more about how can we, as supervisors, better help you develop career readiness while working on-campus. Any questions before we begin?

1. What is your current supervisor doing to help you develop your career readiness competencies?
2. What do you wish your supervisor would do to develop your career readiness competencies?
3. What have any past supervisors done to help you improve your career readiness?

Thank you everyone. Now, let's get started on a form that would help you reflect about your on-campus employment as it pertains to your professional development. (Have students write on the form)

Section A (8 minutes):

Circle your level of proficiency for the following NACE competencies.

CRITICAL THINKING

Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Low High

COMMUNICATION

Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express

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ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Low High

TEAMWORK

Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Low High

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Low High

LEADERSHIP

Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Low High

PROFESSIONALISM

Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Low High

CAREER MANAGEMENT

Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Low High

INTERCULTURAL

Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates, openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences.

Maximizing On-Campus Employment

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Low High



END OF SECTION. WAIT FOR FACILITATOR.

Section B (8 minutes):

List your job duties and the competencies associated with these.

Job Duty	Competency(ies) in Practice	Competency(ies) Proficiency



END OF SECTION. WAIT FOR FACILITATOR.

Section C (8 minutes):

Explain how each of the competencies present in your current job can be applied to your intended career path

Competency	How is it used in your intended career path?	What can you do in your current on-campus job to improve this competency proficiency?

Thank you everyone for participating. Now that you have completed the form, I have three questions for you:

1. What did you like about the form?
2. What would you improve about the form?
3. When and how often do you think it would be helpful to complete this form?

Exhibit D: Cycle One Findings

<u>Main Theme</u>	<u>Sub-themes</u>
Supervisory Characteristics	1) Providing Constant Feedback 2) Forms of Support
Student Work Experience	1) First Office Job 2) Unaware of NACE Competencies
Institutional Culture	1) Perceptions of Federal Work-Study 2) USD's Organizational Culture

Exhibit E: Participant Details, Focus Groups in Cycle Two

Participant	Job Classification	Office of Employment
Participant 1	Full-time professional	The Commons
Participant 2	Full-time professional	The Commons
Participant 3	Full-time professional	Student Leadership & Involvement Center
Participant 4	Full-time professional	Office of Student Affairs
Participant 5	Full-time professional	The Commons
Participant 6	Full-time professional	Center for Health & Wellness
Participant 7	Full-time professional	Student Leadership & Involvement Center
Participant 8	Graduate Assistant	Student Life
Participant 9	Graduate Assistant	The Commons

Exhibit F: Focus Group Questions for Full-Time Professional Staff and Graduate Assistants for Cycle Two

Thank you for taking the time for this interview. Our purpose today is to talk about the career readiness of the student employees you supervise and how on-campus employment at USD can provide a more meaningful experiential learning opportunity. I have here your signed consent form so please let me know if you would like to review it prior to getting started. All answers will be anonymous.

Prior to this focus group, I met with student employees within the Student Affairs division. The questions we will be covering today are informed by these conversations in hopes that we can learn from each other from this process.

1. Do you have a specific documents or training materials for all new student employees? Please describe the training plan.
2. Outside of the quarterly performance review, what other methods do you use to set expectations and provide feedback to students regarding their performance?
3. What unique challenges do you face when working with student employees compared to full-time employees and how do you go about these?
4. How do you help students connect their on-campus employment with their future professional goals?
5. What support or resources do you receive from the institution/supervisor to provide professional development for your students?
6. How do you think on-campus employment can be a better out-of-classroom learning experience for students?

Exhibit G: Cycle Two Findings

<u>Main Theme</u>	<u>Sub-themes</u>
Individual Approach	1) Performance-based Feedback 2) Career Goals Connections a) Coaching b) Passion Alignment with Work c) Informal Career Advising 3) Students as Students First
Institutional Processes	1) Different onboarding process 2) Ambiguous Prioritization of Professional Development

Exhibit H: Interview with Career Development Center Professional

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. The purpose of this interview is for me to better understand the expectations from employers of recent graduates and the ability for students to speak about their work experience. I have here your signed consent form so please let me know if you would like to review it prior to getting started. Additionally, let me know of any questions or if you would like to stop the interview at any time. All answers will be anonymous.

1. How does this office incorporate the NACE competencies into the work done with students to prepare their transition after college?
2. Does this office partner with the student employment office? If so, how?
3. Does this office partner with supervisors of student employees on-campus? If so, how?
4. What differences -if any- do you observe between the students who have on-campus versus off-campus employment?
5. What is the most challenging thing for students when applying for full-time jobs?
6. How do you think on-campus employment can be a better professional development for students?

Thank you very much for all your answers. Are there any other thoughts or insights you would like to share prior to concluding our meeting?

Exhibit I: Interview with Student Employment Office Professional

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. The purpose of this interview is for me to better understand student employment and the role of student employee supervisors within Student Affairs at USD. I have here your signed consent form so please let me know if you would like to review it prior to getting started. Additionally, let me know of any questions or if you would like to stop the interview at any time. All answers will be anonymous.

1. Is there any mandatory training this office requires from student employees? If so, how does that look like?
2. Is there any mandatory training this office requires for student employee supervisors? How does that look like?
3. What are the current challenges faced by students regarding working on campus?
4. What are the current challenges faced by professional staff/faculty/administration regarding employment opportunities on campus?
5. How does this office use the student performance evaluations?
6. What differences, if any, do you see on student employment based on the hiring department? (For example, are the students working in student affairs receiving the same experience than students working in academic affairs?)
7. Are there any initiatives that your office is currently working on to improve student employment? If so, what are these?

Thank you very much for all your answers. Are there any other thoughts or insights you would like to share prior to concluding our meeting?

Exhibit J: Interview with Staff Development Professional within Division of Student Affairs

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. The purpose of this interview is for me to better understand student employment and the role of student employee supervisors within Student Affairs at USD. I have here your signed consent form so please let me know if you would like to review it prior to getting started. Additionally, let me know of any questions or if you would like to stop the interview at any time. All answers will be anonymous.

1. Can you describe how the student development initiatives within student affairs have looked like in the past?
2. What has been learned about these past initiatives?
3. Do you collaborate with other divisions on student development initiatives?
4. It is my understanding that the student affairs division is currently evaluating how to improve these student development initiatives for the students that work within the division. Can you speak more about this process and what changes are being considered?
5. Do you think there is a difference between student development and professional development? Please describe your answer.
6. How do you think on-campus employment can be a better professional development for students?

Thank you very much for all your answers. Are there any other thoughts or insights you would like to share prior to concluding our meeting?

Exhibit K: Job Posting for Student Employment Positions within Division of Student Affairs

Job Description 1:

UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO

CAMPUS RECREATION

Job Title: Intramural Official

Department: Campus Recreation

Range of Possible Hours: Monday – Thursday 6:45-11:00pm

Average Time Commitment: 4-12 hours per week

Employment Period: Spring Semester 2018

Required Qualifications:

- USD Student
- Demonstrates effective verbal communication skills
- Flexible work schedule to meet operation's needs

Preferred Qualifications:

- Previous officiating & customer service experience
- Outstanding oral communication and interpersonal skills
- First Aid/CPR certified
- Ability to work at least 2 nights per week

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Enforce Intramural Handbook & Sport Rules completely and consistently
- Discuss rules and clarify interpretations with participants prior to all contests
- Assist with set-up and breakdown of field or court – including safety check & inventory
- Officiate each contest with integrity, demonstrating complete knowledge of game rules
- Model friendly, positive customer service and program recruitment at all times
- Complete official's onboarding & orientation
- Attend & contribute to all official's trainings & meetings
- Demonstrate connection and understanding to the USD's mission & values
- Understand emergency & injury procedures

Work Environment:

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee

to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Physical requirements include but are not limited to: walking, running, bending, lifting, pushing, pulling, and carrying loads up to 50 pounds. Work will require standing and moving for extended periods of time.

Compensation & Hours:

\$11.50/hr. 4-12 hours per week depending on schedule & sports willing to officiate

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For more information contact the Intramural Sports Office at (619)260-4275, or email at jcirillo@sandiego.edu.

Source:

<https://www.sandiego.edu/campusrecreation/documents/Intramural%20Official%20Job%20Description.pdf>

Job Description 2:

Mulvaney Center for Community, Awareness, and Social Action

Job Title: Tutor

Pay Rate: \$12.00/hour

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, between 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm timeframe

Contact: Austin Galy, austingaly@sandiego.edu

Required: Federal Work-Study included in 2018-2019 Financial Aid Award

Responsibilities:

- Facilitate After School Program, serving 20 eligible children K-5th grade at onsite residential community setting for three housing units
- Spend 10 hours a week engaging with onsite staff and participants
- Ensure prompt and consistent attendance and arrange substitute hours if necessary
- Establish consistent relationship with the organization and the population you work with at your site
- Attend all training meetings and in-service during semester
- Maintain communication and problem prevention with the USD Volunteer/Work-Study Coordinator
- Collaborate with student-leaders in liaison with USD Volunteer/Work-Study Coordinator and support staff
- Maintain communication with parents, guardians, and families of the students served
- Develop and implement enrichment, project based learning opportunities and academically focused curriculum for students ranging from K-5th grade
- Help with program records, evaluation materials, and other program documentation as needed

Source:

<https://www.sandiego.edu/financialaid/student-employment/fwsjobs-e-m.php>